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# Walsh Wins Delay in Iran Testimony

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A federal judge, acting at the request of independent counsel Lawrence E. Walsh, has agreed to wait 20 days before ordering four witnesses to testify before the House and Senate committees investigating the Iran-contra affair.

Chief U.S. District Court Judge Aubrey E. Robinson Jr. ordered the statutory delay applied to congressional requests that limited immunity from prosecution be granted to the four witnesses in return for their testimony.

Under the law, Walsh cannot block the immunity grants but is entitled to 20-day delays to permit him to compile independent evidence that can be used in any criminal prosecution of the witnesses. Once they testify under the immu-

nity grants, no information derived from what they say may be used against them unless they perjure themselves.

The four witnesses named in Robinson's orders were:

- Retired Air Force lieutenant colonel Richard B. Gadd, who was involved in the White House-directed effort to resupply the Nicaraguan contras when U.S. military aid was cut off by Congress in 1984.

- Robert L. Earl, who was a deputy to Lt. Col. Oliver L. North on the National Security Council staff. North was fired from the NSC last November for allegedly diverting proceeds from secret Iranian arms sales to aid the contras fighting the government of Nicaragua.

- Robert Owen, a friend of North who worked as a consultant for the State Department's humanitarian aid program for the contras.

- Tomas Castillo, the pseudonym

used by the former Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Costa Rica who was recalled last December for giving assistance to the contras at North's direction and allegedly misleading the CIA's inspector general later on when questioned about his activities.

The Senate and House select committees voted March 18 to grant limited immunity to the four witnesses and to two other individuals for whom Walsh did not seek delays.

The two are John Cupp, who worked as security director at Gadd's Vienna, Va., company, and Cynthia Dondlinger, the company's contracting and accounting officer.

Applications for all six were filed with Judge Robinson Monday after a preliminary 10-day delay also provided by law.

Under Robinson's orders, congressional investigators must wait until April 19 before questioning Gadd, Earl, Owen or Castillo.

Under an earlier order granting Walsh a similar 20-day delay, they must wait until April 10 before talking to Albert Hakim, an Iranian-American businessman believed to be knowledgeable about Swiss bank accounts used in the Iran-contra operations.